

and rotating the plug body 210 clockwise, as shown by directional arrow Z in Fig. 6.

Plug body 210 also includes a hollow central core 216 which serves to increase the flexibility of the plug body 210.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 11, line 17 with the following amended paragraph:

(Amended) Referring now to Figs. 7 and 8, there is illustrated an apparatus for facilitating vascular access constructed in accordance with still another embodiment of the subject invention and designated generally by reference numeral 300. Apparatus 300 includes a vascular access port 320 and an elongated cylindrical plug body 310 and is substantially similar in structure and function to the apparatus shown in Figs. 3 and 4. This apparatus differs however, in that locking mechanism 314 includes at least one protuberance 344 disposed on the proximal end 342 of the plug body 310 and adapted and configured for insertion into a corresponding recess 322 disposed at the proximal end 338 of the vascular access port 320. The locking mechanism is engaged by grasping handle portion 112 and linearly inserting plug body 310 into vascular access port 320, as shown by directional arrow y, until protuberance 344 is positioned within corresponding recess 322. Plug body 310 also includes a hollow central core 316 which serves to increase the flexibility of the plug body 310.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please replace Claims 1 and 25 with the following amended claims:

1. (Twice Amended) An apparatus for facilitating vascular access comprising:
 - a) a vascular access port defining an elongated tubular body of predetermined length with a central lumen having opposed proximal and distal end